

Chicago Heights Boulevard VOC Plume Superfund Site

DESK STATEMENT

EPA will be overseeing a Time-Critical Removal at the Chicago Heights Boulevard VOC Plume Superfund Site. The site is located in the Elmwood Park community, an unincorporated area of St. Louis County, Missouri. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) has been overseeing cleanup activities under the State Hazardous Waste Program. Recently, MDNR requested EPA obtain oversight of cleanup operations. EPA is currently working with MDNR to transfer state oversight to federal oversight for future cleanup actions. The transfer is currently being handled through the Superfund legal process.

Elmwood Park is an African-American community; therefore, public engagement, outreach and education will be supported through both EPA's Environmental Justice and Community Involvement programs.

EPA was informed by MDNR that 18 homes in the Elmwood Park community have been impacted by vapor intrusion (VI) from a groundwater VOC plume. Three of the homes have VI levels that exceed health based standards in homes for indoor air. EPA is currently developing the required documentation to begin a removal action which will address the three most impacted homes, and that will design an appropriate mitigation system to address the vapor intrusion. EPA's cleanup process will seek out those properties that have been impacted by VI, and will provide mitigation systems in each home that has levels above the health based standards.

EPA participated in a public meeting hosted by the St. Louis County Housing Authority for Elmwood Park residents on August 9, 2012. EPA provided information on how groundwater plumes create vapor intrusion in homes, and explained to residents the cleanup processes used to address vapor intrusion. EPA was informed at the meeting that 9 – 10 homes would be re-sampled by the State and contractors on August 20. Sampling results were completed the week of September 3, and that sampling results would be released to the residents no later than the week of September 10 by the potentially responsible party.

EPA is working with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry to assist with public education and outreach VI and health impacts.

EPA will increase community awareness and education to help residents understand how their neighborhood has been impacted and the appropriate steps needed to address hazardous waste in their area. This will be done by hosting public venues, conducting one-on-one interviews with residents, telephone calls, website updates, etc. to provide additional information about environmental processes to address contamination, not only in the Elmwood Park community, but at all hazardous waste sites.

EPA is planning to host a public meeting for residents in September 2012 to provide additional information about groundwater plumes, how they impact communities, and what levels of contamination create risks for the public and the environment. EPA will continue public outreach throughout the entire cleanup process. EPA will provide additional information as it becomes available.

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